



Partnering to Build HIV/AIDS Capacity in Russia: HIV/AIDS Treatment, Care, and Support Project

AIHA's HIV/AIDS Treatment, Care, and Support Project in Russia builds on the success of four partnerships established by AIHA in 2004 with USAID support. The Saratov/Bemidji, St. Petersburg/New Haven, Orenburg/New York City, and Togliatti/Providence partnerships linked US institutions with significant experience providing high quality medical and support services to people living with HIV with their counterparts in Russia. Working together, partners developed replicable HIV treatment and care models in the target regions focusing on four main areas:

- Care coordination and case management
- Patient management and adherence
- Patient access and retention
- HIV and TB detection and treatment

AIHA provided direct technical assistance and support to these partnerships, conducting clinical trainings, replicating our model PMTCT Program, establishing HIV/AIDS Information Resource Centers to enhance use of information and communication technology at partner institutions, and developing or adapting Russian-language publications on HIV/AIDS. In addition, AIHA and its partners collaborated closely with local health administrations to ensure sustainability of model programs developed through the partnerships.

With support from Russia's national HIV/AIDS program and international donor organizations such as the Global Fund, availability of antiretroviral medications has increased dramatically. Consequently, in 2006 AIHA began rolling out successful HIV treatment, care, and support models in the PEPFAR priority regions of St. Petersburg and Orenburg Oblast. AIHA's scale-up activities in these regions largely replicate and expand on partnership accomplishments.

Clinical trainings on ART and opportunistic infections—coupled with onsite mentoring and other support activities provided by US partners—are successfully building district and regional networks of well qualified healthcare providers.

The project is helping prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV by improving coordination of related services, developing an institutional assessment tool, conducting clinical trainings, and supporting implementation of a specially designed database that facilitates effective monitoring of vertical transmission and prevention services. It also combats stigma and discrimination while at the same time arming a larger healthcare workforce with the knowledge and skills they need to effectively manage patients through Primary HIV Care and Tolerance Building workshops.

Other focus areas include management of HIV and TB co-infection, palliative care, HIV case management, ART adherence support with focus on patients who are injecting drug users, and quality assurance through chart audits and patient satisfaction surveys.

PROJECT SNAPSHOT

Launch Date

- September 2004

Target Regions

- 2004-2006: St. Petersburg and Togliatti; Orenburg and Saratov oblasts
- 2006-present: St. Petersburg; Orenburg Oblast

Key Objectives

- Improve patient management, adherence, retention, and access to care
- Improve diagnosis and treatment of opportunistic infections, including TB
- Assure HIV care coordination and case management
- Strengthen PMTCT programs

Key Accomplishments to Date

- Partnership models support more than 3,500 patients currently receiving ART at two pilot sites
- 100 percent of primary level infectious disease specialists in target regions are trained to manage ART
- HIV/AIDS Information Resource Centers established at pilot sites provide access to evidence-based HIV/AIDS literature to care providers and patients
- Case management system was introduced at AIDS Centers and other care institutions
- System of coordinating care among substance abuse and primary care clinics was improved

